

**THE FAIR PURITAN. AN
HISTORICAL
ROMANCE OF THE
DAYS OF WITCHCRAFT**

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The fair puritan. An historical romance of the days of witchcraft by Henry William Herbert

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HISTORICAL ROMANCE

OF

THE DAYS OF WITCHCRAFT.

BY

HENRY WILLIAM HERBERT

("FRANK FORESTER")

AUTHOR OF "THE WARWICK WOODLANDS," "THE CAVALIERS OF ENGLAND,"
"MY SHOOTING BOX," "CROMWELL," "THE BROTHERS," ETC.

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE*

THIS, the only *American* Romance of the author, is truly a historical romance; many of the persons being genuine historical characters, and the facts generally and the spirit of the age carefully preserved. The period is one of the most interesting of the early times of North American history, being that of the subsidence of the terrible excitement of the Salem witchcraft, the tyrannous government of Sir Edmund Andros, and the first organized and successful resistance to the authority of the crown.

The author respectfully submits it to the public with the hope that it will be found a worthy companion to his other works of historic fiction, whose scenes and characters have been gathered in foreign lands.

*Mr. Herbert prepared this romance for the press in 1856. It had been stereotyped, when commercial disaster interfered with its publication. The plates were afterward mistaid, and only recently discovered. Meanwhile, the accomplished scholar and novelist has rested from his literary labors and passed beyond the tomb.

C. C. S.

December, 1874.

THE FAIR PURITAN.

A Romance of the Bay Province.

CHAPTER I.

THE FOREST DWELLING.

ὦ κῆρα, φλοῖος, Ἠλέκτρα, ποτὶ σὺν ἀγροτέρων ἀελάν.

IN the latter part of the seventeenth century, the capital of Massachusetts, or, as it was then usually termed, the Bay Province, was the largest, as it is still the most beautiful, of American cities.

Already, at that early period, it had done more than laying the foundations of that reputation which she still possesses, as the metropolis of transatlantic letters, if not of wealth or of commerce.

It was a peculiar trait, and one the most redeeming, among much bigotry, much stupid and fanatical intolerance, much hairsplitting and strife of ultra-creeds—it was, I say, a peculiar and most honorable trait in the character of the hard old Puritans, that wheresoever they set foot, they left their track permanently stamped, not as their Dutch contemporaries of

the Nieu Netherlands in warehouses and factories, but in the nobler work of schools and colleges, adapted to the future wants, not to the present means of their sparse population.

No part of what are now the United States was peopled from a stock so sound as Massachusetts.

Virginia, indeed, had to boast a nobler lineage, a race imbued with the noblest sentiments that grace humanity, the highest chivalry, the clearest sense of honor, qualities for which, to this day, her sons are deservedly renowned.

It may not be denied, however, that soldiers rather than scholars, adventurers rather than statesmen, were her settlers; while, in addition to the vast advantage she derived from the character of her first governor, the moderate and admirable Winthrop, Massachusetts had among her founders, "many of high endowments, large fortune, and the best education; scholars well versed in all the learning of the times; clergymen who ranked among the most eloquent and pious in the realm"*—men equally removed from intolerant bigotry and sectarian license—men equally averse to arbitrary power and democratic anarchy—men, in short, than whom none could be found better suited to their great office, as the forefathers of a mighty nation.

Cambridge was founded almost simultaneously with the city to which it is still the brightest ornament; and it is worthy of remark that the oldest born is yet the most eminent of American colleges, and that—right consequence of noble causes—Boston alone yields as of right to mental power and literary eminence, that social rank which the less elevated spirit of her rivals grants to superior wealth, or to success and enterprise in traffic.

Nor were the fruits of this higher civilization displayed only in great features, in the grandeur of public institutions. They

* Bancroft's History, vol. i, p. 355.

were as manifest in the humanities of the domestic circle, as in the morals of the forum.

And it is not incurious to observe, that, as if to disprove, on the very face of his country, the general though most unjust assertion which would attribute to the New-Englander a genius peculiarly money-making and gain-loving—to observe, I say, as every one must observe who has travelled in the pleasant places of his land, that the New-Englander *alone* has spared time from his gainful toils for the adornment of his household gods—for planting trees in his village ways, and cultivating flowers in his cottage-gardens, and making his home—sure test of a refined and gentle spirit—not rich alone in those creature comforts, the taste for which we share with the brutes that perish, but in those nicer charms, which fill the eye with pleasure, the heart with patriotism and with love—which last is virtue.

Nor is the culture, which we now behold, laughing out, under the brilliant suns and cloudless skies of America, in the sweet villages and glowing fields adjacent to the metropolis of New England, as it laughs nowhere else on this side the Atlantic, the tardy growth of progressive centuries.

The English elms, which lift their heads still green and comely and untouched by age above the roofs of the old city, were planted there before one generation had elapsed, after the pilgrim's foot first trod the rock of Plymouth.

And the log-cabins of the first settlers displayed, unlike the shanties of the west, the cultivated taste which had been nursed in remote and polished regions, by the red-berried mountain-ash planted before the door, by the sweet-scented creeper trained round the humble casement, and by the rose or pink brought from beyond the sea to bloom in the bleak precincts of the New England clime.

In the year 1688, for it was at that period that the great